

said? Don't negotiate with the United States of America. Don't negotiate with this President or other nations. Whatever you do is going to be subject to congressional review. There is no guarantee we will support it. Even if it is supported by Congress, there is no guarantee that any future President would enforce this agreement.

You may even hear it tonight in the Republican Presidential candidate debate. Isn't it interesting that this was the first time in the history of the United States, the very first time that a group of Senators intervened in a Presidential negotiation in national security—the first time that has ever happened. And 47 Republican Senators, including every Member of the leadership, signed that letter. What would happen if 47 Democrats had sent a letter to Saddam Hussein prior to the invasion of Iraq saying: Don't pay any attention to President Bush. What do you think the reaction of Vice President Cheney would have been? He would have had us all up on charges—treason. That is exactly what happened here. There was a letter from 47 Republican Senators saying: Don't negotiate with the United States. The President ignored it. The negotiations continued.

The agreement is before us. There was a key vote last week, a critical vote. Every single Member of the Senate has publicly declared where they stand on this agreement. After some 8 weeks of deliberation and debate, the vote took place last week, but it wasn't enough for Senator MCCONNELL. He demanded that we replay the vote last night. We did, with the same result.

I don't know how many times he is going to bring this before us, but may I suggest to the Republican leader there are some items that he might consider moving to. We are 8 legislative days away from shutting down the Government of the United States. Should we be discussing that? Most Americans would say so. Most Americans think it is embarrassing that the U.S. Government would shut down because a willful group—a small minority—is determined to get that done. Too many people suffer when that happens. We have to do everything we can to keep this government open.

Let's get beyond this debate. We have already established what the vote is, and the Republicans didn't come up with the 60 votes necessary to move forward. That is the story. They don't like the ending, but that is the ending. Let's move forward in a responsible way to do two things—first, to make sure that Iran lives up to this agreement and do everything in our power to enforce it, and second, get on with the business of government. Let's fund this government. Let's not become a nation that people look at and say: Who is in charge here if a Republican Congress would shut down a government for a second time, as they did a couple of years ago? Who is in charge? Let's get into that issue and let's do it in a responsible and a bipartisan way.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Missouri.

REAUTHORIZATION OF THE EXPORT-IMPORT BANK

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I rise to talk about something very important to small businesses in Missouri. Ironically, tonight there is going to be a debate at the Ronald Reagan Presidential Library. I hear a lot of talk from my friends on the other side of the aisle about small businesses, but here we are today confronting the failure and the job losses associated with our not embracing the Export-Import Bank. President Eisenhower, President Ford, President Reagan, President George Bush—both President George Bushes.

This was not controversial, and it is really easy to understand why. The Export-Import Bank has never been controversial. This is a credit agency. There are 60 other credit agencies around the world that support companies in their countries—60 around the world. It is not a level playing field in the global economy if America decides to no longer support our manufacturing economy and the small businesses associated with that by removing this important tool for exports. It is real jobs. This is not fairytale stuff, and this is not crony capitalism. This is an analysis of risks done by a credit agency and that credit agency, when it analyzes the risk, can keep track of it. We can figure out if in fact they are taking good risks or if in fact it is scratching somebody's back by virtue of the fact that \$7 billion has been put in our Treasury after the Bank has covered its expenses.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SULIVAN). All time for morning business has expired.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak in morning business for a couple more minutes.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. In 2014 this credit agency that all the other countries in the world have access to put \$674 million in the U.S. Treasury.

Let me count off here. It creates jobs, supports manufacturing, and adds money into our Treasury. What is the problem?

My staff and I have met with nearly 100 companies in Missouri, and 90 percent of Ex-Im's work directly supports small businesses. I will say that again: 90 percent supports small businesses.

I will give a couple of examples. There is a small company in Joplin, MO. These kids started it in their garage. They build skateboard parks. They now have a manufacturing facility, and they are manufacturing skateboard parks which are exported around the world. They can't go to their local community bank to help their customer in Indonesia. They need

what other countries have—a credit agency that analyzes risk on a global basis.

I toured a small Kansas City company now run by the third generation of the same family. They rely on Ex-Im Bank to help them manage their risk of extending credit in foreign markets. Sixty percent of their sales are exports. Do we want to shutter this company? Is that what we want to do? Do we want them to have to cut their employee base by 60 percent because they can no longer export?

There is a St. Louis company that makes cutting-edge play equipment for children and uses the insurance from Ex-Im Bank to work with customers in South America, Australia, and beyond. There is another small St. Louis manufacturer that was founded as a family-owned company in 1951 that sells electrical components to Saudi Arabia, Brazil, and Thailand. They depend on Ex-Im Bank.

What is going on in this place? How has this become controversial? This was never been controversial, and there is one representative that is in a key position in the House of Representatives that is shutting this whole thing down. The American people ought to be outraged. We can vote on Iran as many times as you guys want us to if it makes everybody feel better. I have no problem with that. It was a tough decision for me. I made up my mind. But to be wasting time on political posturing when these jobs—and I have real examples of contracts that aren't going through now because Ex-Im is not there.

I plead with my friends on the other side of the aisle: Make time in your busy schedule of scoring political points on the Iranian agreement to reauthorize Export-Import Bank. Jobs in my State depend on it. Yes, we have unemployment down to 5 percent in this country, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't still focus on jobs every day in the Senate.

With that, I yield the floor and ask for the help of all my Republican colleagues to help us get Ex-Im Bank across the finish line so small businesses in this country do not suffer at the hands of global competition that figures out that this ought to be easy.

I thank the Presiding Officer.

CONCLUSION OF MORNING BUSINESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Morning business is closed.

HIRE MORE HEROES ACT OF 2015

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate will resume consideration of H.J. Res. 61, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A joint resolution (H.J. Res. 61) amending the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to exempt employees with health coverage under TRICARE or the Veterans Administration

from being taken into account for purposes of determining the employers to which the employer mandate applies under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act.

Pending:

McConnell amendment No. 2640, of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2656 (to amendment No. 2640), to prohibit the President from waiving, suspending, reducing, providing relief from, or otherwise limiting the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran.

McConnell amendment No. 2657 (to amendment No. 2656), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2658 (to the language proposed to be stricken by amendment No. 2640), to change the enactment date.

McConnell amendment No. 2659 (to amendment No. 2658), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell motion to commit the joint resolution to the Committee on Foreign Relations, with instructions, McConnell amendment No. 2660, to prohibit the President from waiving, suspending, reducing, providing relief from, or otherwise limiting the application of sanctions pursuant to an agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran.

McConnell amendment No. 2661 (to the instructions) amendment No. 2660), of a perfecting nature.

McConnell amendment No. 2662 (to amendment No. 2661), of a perfecting nature.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the time until 12:30 p.m. will be equally divided between the two leaders or their designees.

The Senator from Tennessee.

Mr. CORKER. Mr. President, I rise today to speak about the agreement before us. I find in this line of work that repetition is sometimes useful. I know my friend from Illinois mentioned how we ought to be focused on something else, but I think all of us understand that there is an assumed deadline on this topic, which is set for tomorrow.

I say to my friends on both sides of the aisle that the likelihood is that after tomorrow we will move on to the other types of business that we need to deal with. But this is not, as my friend from Missouri mentioned, an issue of political points. The issue with Iran is one of the most significant, if not the most significant, foreign policy issue that we will likely deal with while we are here in the Senate. I think it is important, while this is before us, to spend as much time as possible talking about this issue, focusing on this issue, debating this issue, and making sure that everyone understands what the contents of this Iranian deal are.

I will walk through it, if I could for a few moments, and lay out why we are where we are today.

I know the Presiding Officer is new here and brings a wealth of national security experience from previous posts that he had with the State Department prior to serving here. But what brought us here really was this body acting almost in a unanimous way to put sanctions in place four times since 2010. We worked with the House of Representatives to put sanctions in place because we knew that Iran was doing things,

such as nuclear development, that were going to be damaging to the world. So we sanctioned and punished them. We put crippling sanctions on their economy, and we did that collectively.

This is something that very few people on either side of the aisle objected to. We acted in unison. It was the crippling sanctions that we put together that really brought Iran to the table. Let's face it. Their economy and standard of living were causing people in Iran to become restless, and so finally Iran said: OK, it is time to talk.

When these talks began, our President stated that what we would do in these talks was to end Iran's nuclear program. And just for what it is worth, I think people on both sides of the aisle celebrated that goal—ending Iran's nuclear program.

I might remind people who may be just tuning into this that Iran has 19,000 centrifuges right now, and 10,000 of those are operating. They built underground bunkers at a place called Fordow. It is hard to get to it. It is hard to take those out with munitions, if you will. They built a plutonium facility called Arak.

By the way, much of this was done in a clandestine way. All of it was done violating U.N. Security Council resolutions.

I will say everyone here understands fully that Iran has zero practical need for any of this. Iran has one nuclear facility. Everyone knows that it would be so much cheaper for them to just purchase enriched uranium to fuel that one facility. But they say: No, we want to be leaders in medical isotopes. For what it is worth, if Iran really wanted to develop the expertise around medical isotopes, they would have 500 centrifuges. So we all know that the purpose of this program has not been for civilian purposes. It has been to cause them to be a threshold nuclear country. We know that. Everyone knows that. They know that, we know that, and every country involved in the discussions with Iran knows that.

First of all, we know what their goals are. So when the President says that in these negotiations what we are going to do is end Iran's nuclear program, I think most people in this body would celebrate that. So he began the discussions, and as he started moving along, it became very apparent to those of us paying attention that what he planned to do was to enter into what is called an executive agreement.

Now, for people who don't do what we do on a daily basis, there are three ways that the President can enter into an international agreement. One way is through a treaty that requires a two-thirds approval by this body. A treaty is interesting because it binds future Presidents, and it binds future Congresses. But the President decided that was not the route he was going to take.

There is a second route he could have taken, and that is called a congressional-executive Agreement. While it is not as strong as a treaty, it does create

a law that is binding on future Presidents and future Congresses. The President decided he was not going to go that route.

The President decided that he was going to do this unilaterally, through what is called an Executive agreement. As we know, an Executive agreement is something the President can do, if he chooses, on his own. The problem with it is that it doesn't survive his Presidency. Another President can do something very different.

In this case, however, as everybody has analyzed this deal, everyone understands that we lose all of our leverage over the next 9 months and give it away. When people in this body began to realize that we brought Iran to the table—or at least played a heavy role in bringing them to the table—and that the President was going to use what is called a national security waiver to waive away all the congressional sanctions so that he could enter into this Executive agreement without ever talking to us, we achieved something else that was very important. As a matter of fact, this is the first time this has happened since I have been in the Senate, and there are a lot of misunderstandings about it. For the first time in Congress since I have been in the Senate—on a strongly bipartisan basis—we took power back from the President. We said: Mr. President, we know that you can enter into Executive agreements, but in this particular case, since we put the sanctions in place that brought them to the table—by the way, over your objections—we want a chance to go through this agreement in detail, and we want the right to either approve or disapprove. But you have to present us with this, and it has to sit before us for 60 days, which it will have done as of tomorrow, and we want the right to weigh in as to whether we believe the substance of this deal is good for our Nation.

We had 98 Senators in this body vote for this. One of the Senators who was absent supported it, and that makes it 99. It is pretty remarkable that on a bipartisan basis 99 Senators said: No, we want this to lie before us because we believe this is one of the biggest foreign policy issues we are going to deal with, we believe that this is a vote of conscience, and we believe that every Senator and every House Member—which is unusual with these kind of agreements—should weigh in and be able to voice their opinion.

So we have gone through the deal, and what is fascinating about it is—I hate to be pejorative, but we had almost unanimity on putting sanctions in place to bring them to the table. We had almost unanimity on the fact that we should be able to weigh in. It is my strong belief that in lieu of the President achieving the deal that he did or the goals that he stated to end Iran's nuclear program, obviously, we have done anything but that.

So what has happened is we have totally squandered an opportunity to

unite this Nation, and others, around ending their program. Instead, our Nation, with other "great nations" have agreed to allow Iran not only to not end their program but to industrialize it. We have agreed to let them develop intercontinental ballistic missiles so they can deliver a nuclear weapon. We agreed to let them do research and development.

Right now they are using the old IR-1 centrifuges, which are like antiques, but we are going to allow them to do research and development on the IR-2s, IR-4s, IR-6s, and IR-8s, which we know are multiple times faster. We have lifted the conventional weapons embargo and the ballistic weapons embargo, for some reason, just throwing it in for good measure. We are allowing them, for the first time, to begin testing.

So what has happened is now in this body, there is some tepid support—I see my friend from Michigan, I have other friends, and I haven't heard anybody come out and say this is a great agreement. What they are saying—not necessarily the Senator from Michigan but others—is, well, we are where we are. We are where we are.

This is not a very good agreement. It is flawed. Even though Congress, 200 times, has sent international agreements back to the executive branch—200 times—in this case: We are where we are. And our friends in Russia—by the way, has anybody seen what our friends in Russia are doing in Syria right now? Yes, they are really good friends. Has anybody seen what China is doing right now in the South China Sea? They are building their third airstrip, claiming territory that for thousands of years has belonged to other countries from the standpoint of territorial waters. People are saying—our friends and allies—what will we do about our friends and allies?

So here is where we are. I could go on and on. I just cannot believe that our great Nation, with "our friends" from Great Britain, Germany, and France and "our friends" from China and Russia, squandered—squandered—an opportunity, had a rogue nation with a boot on its neck—a boot on its neck—we squandered the opportunity. Now, with our approval, they can industrialize their program. As a matter of fact, they don't have to violate the terms of this deal. They can just honor the terms of this deal. Their economy will flourish. By the way, it is hard for me to believe this, but I think most people understand that we are giving them back \$100 billion. We are going to do that over the next 9 months. We are lifting the major sanctions that have crippled them. We are doing that without us even asking them to do much. From that point on, by the way, the leverage shifts from us to them.

We are very concerned about what they are doing in Syria. By the way, they have doubled down on that since the agreement was reached with the nuclear file. We are very concerned about what they are doing with

Hezbollah in Lebanon. We are very concerned about what they are doing with Hamas, allowing rockets to be fired into Israel. We are very concerned about what they are doing in Lebanon with the Houthis. We are very concerned about what they are doing in Bahrain with thousands of men and women in uniform trying to keep the strait open. We are very concerned about that, but in 9 months, if we express our concerns, what are they going to do? They are going to say: We have all of our money, you have lifted all the sanctions, and if you press back against us for terrorism or human rights or violations in this agreement that are minor, we are just going to start a nuclear program again. So it is kind of unbelievable that we have ended up in this place.

What is happening on the floor now, just to explain to the American people, we have a process in the Senate which says that at the end of debate—by the way, we have had a lot of debate on this. We have had 12 hearings in the Foreign Relations Committee alone. The Presiding Officer serves on the Committee on Armed Services and they have had hearings. The Intelligence Committee has had hearings. We have had hearings as a body. We have had personal meetings. As a matter of fact, I would say this body knows more about this international agreement than any international agreement in modern times. As a matter of fact, thanks to us pushing back against this administration, the American people know more about this agreement than any agreement in modern times. It is amazing. Thank goodness we passed the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act; otherwise, none of this would be known—none of this.

So where we are today is we all said this was one of the biggest foreign policy issues to come before us; we want the American people to know where we stand on the substance of the deal. So for people tuning in, here is the way the Senate works.

When a vote comes before us—and right now, since there is a strong bipartisan majority of people who oppose this deal—as a matter of fact, the two most knowledgeable Democrats on foreign policy issues, the ranking member and the former chairman and ranking member, who know more about foreign policy than any Democrat in this body—both oppose this deal. So on a strong bipartisan majority, we have a group of people who think we can do better. Just like the 200-plus times we have sent agreements back to say do better, we are saying we think we can do better.

So here is what is happening. When a bill comes or a vote comes before the Senate, we have these rules, and there is a rule that says there is a cloture vote. What cloture means is that people say: OK. We have heard enough about this. We believe it is time to take a vote.

I just heard the Senator from Illinois say we have been talking about this

way too long. It is time to move beyond it. He left out a minor detail; that is, it takes 60 Members of the Senate to say we have heard enough about it. It is time to vote. But what is happening is that we have 42 Members of one party who are in the minority—42 Senators who are saying: No, we are not going to allow this to move to a final vote. We are not going to do it.

We know it is not about debate. We know—as a matter of fact, the second highest officer on the Democratic side says we need to move on to other business. It is time to move on to other business, and what we need to do is invoke cloture and let's vote. But let me tell my colleagues what is really happening here. It has sort of taken on—I have said this several times—it has taken on kind of a Tammy Wynette kind of flavor: Let's stand by our man. Let's stand by our man. We don't want the President to have to deal with a resolution of disapproval; we want to protect him from that. We don't want to embarrass him, that there is a bipartisan—by the way, the smartest, most well-versed, deeply informed on policy Member on his side of the aisle is agreeing with the vast majority of the Senate—58 Senators—saying this is not good for our Nation because this does not end the program. By the way, if this ended the program, do we know what would be happening? We would have 100 Senators saying: Let's vote to approve this. This is outstanding. The President achieved his stated goal. But since that isn't the case, what we want to do is send a resolution of disapproval to the President. But we have 42 Senators on the one hand saying let's move on and let's deal with funding government but on the other hand are not agreeing to a final vote.

So we have one more chance. I just want to say this. We have a lot of partisanship that happens here. Let's face it, we do. I get it. It happens. I am going to have to say in this case, the majority leader has allowed me to work with my friends on the other side of the aisle. He has allowed me to move this through in an appropriate way. At every juncture—when my friends on the other side of the aisle felt as though something was occurring that was adding unnecessary temper or maybe something was getting out of line and we needed to alter our course of action—at every juncture, the majority leader said: Senator CORKER, if you think this is the best way of moving ahead to keep the bipartisanship that I have had with Senator CARDIN and Senator MENENDEZ and so many others, have at it.

I just want to remind people that as we entered this debate—as we know, there are all kinds of inflammatory amendments that could be added to this debate—the leader filled the tree. Now, for people out in the listening audience, fill the tree, what does that mean. What he did was he kept any inflammatory amendments from being offered. The only thing that is before

us—I know he has filed an amendment now. After two times, the minority will not let us move to a final vote. I know there is going to be one that is tough—I don't know if it is that tough or not—to vote on this Thursday, but the fact is that the purpose has been for us to move to a final vote. Forty-two Senators will not allow us to have that vote of conscience. I want to say again to those listening in, the process vote of any debate is not a vote of conscience. That is not a vote of conscience. The vote of conscience is, when we take the final vote, do we believe that this Iran deal—the President's Iran deal—is something that is good for our country, will create stability in the region, and certainly will keep them from getting a nuclear weapon. Fifty-eight of us don't think so. Actually, I have to believe, from listening to the comments of many of my friends when they talk about how flawed it is, I think there is actually a whole lot of concern, even though sometimes—and I understand when you have a President of your own party, sometimes it is hard to go against the President. I get that. I understand the pressures that come to play when that happens.

But where we are, I say to the American people and to my fellow Senators, is we want to move to a final vote, an up-or-down vote, which, by the way, by the rules of the Senate, is a majority vote. We want to move to that. We have 42 Senators who are keeping us from that. What I hope is going to happen over the course of the next 24 hours is that a couple Senators, a few, will say: Look, we did vote 98 to 1 to register our feelings about the substance of this most important agreement. We did. We really did do that. Maybe it is appropriate that we, on behalf of the American people, not get stuck on this procedural issue, this cloture vote. We have debated this plenty, so let's go ahead and move to a final vote. That is what I hope is going to happen.

I am thankful, though—I do want to say one more time—I thank people on both sides of the aisle for having the gumption to buck the administration and to put in place four tranches of sanctions to get them to the table. I thank both sides of the aisle—by the way, led by Senators MENENDEZ and KIRK, led by the two of them, one Democrat and one Republican—we did that together. I thank people on both sides of the aisle for putting us in the position to actually have the documents, to know what this deal is about, to have this debate, to be able to weigh in.

I want to say one more time that had the President done what he said he would do—and that is negotiate to end the program—we would have 100 people supporting it, but he didn't. We all know that. Everyone knows that is not what has happened. We have agreed to industrialize their program, let them do research and development, let them create delivery mechanisms to make

sure they can send these nuclear warheads they are going to be on the verge of developing a long way across the oceans to places such as America and other places. I don't know why we did that, but we did.

So now we just want a chance to vote yes or no. Do we believe this is an agreement that will stand the test of time? Is it something that is good for our country? Do we believe this is something that if Iran wishes to, will keep them from developing a nuclear weapon?

I look forward to the comments of my friend from Michigan, and I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Michigan.

Ms. STABENOW. Mr. President, first of all, let me agree with the distinguished chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee that, in fact, we did come together on strong sanctions against Iran that has brought us to this situation on a bipartisan basis. We did come together on the process that would create legislatively a way for us to make a decision. That was done on a bipartisan basis. What I regret is, at this point, even though we are following through on the legislative process we adopted, it now has become so partisan. That is not good for America, it is not good for Israel, and it is not good for, frankly, the world to see this happen.

So while agreeing on part of what the distinguished chairman said, I have to disagree on many things, although I am not going to take my time to go into them now. But certainly the process we are using is no different than any other major bill—health care reform, financial services reform—and it was set up in what we passed. So we can try to make it into some partisan issue now. The reality is we have all thoughtfully taken a position. We have voted. Everyone knows everyone's position. So now we are just in the process right now, unfortunately, I believe, of politics, which does not help us move forward for our country or for our allies.

AMENDMENT NO. 2656

Mr. President, I wish to speak to an issue I am deeply concerned about, which is the next vote we are going to have on Thursday, and speak to a very important young man who is an American hero and who is caught in the politics of what is happening right now.

Amir Hekmati from Flint, MI, is an American hero. He served his country as a marine between 2001 and 2005 in Iraq and Afghanistan. He served with valor. He served with honor. He was awarded the Combat Action Ribbon and the Good Conduct Medal. But this morning, Amir woke up in an Iranian prison. He has been in that prison for 4 years and 19 days. During that time, Amir has been tortured. The prison is notorious for its deplorable conditions. While he has been there, his father, in Flint, MI, has been battling terminal brain cancer.

The Iranian Government is playing politics with Amir Hekmati's life. Unfortunately, though, now, today, the Senate Republican leader is also playing politics with Amir's life. The imprisonment of this veteran, this American hero, is being used by the Senate majority leader in a transparent effort to score some cheap political points, in my judgment, and it is appalling. No American should ever be used in this way—none of us. This is a young man whose parents are desperately worried about his safety, who have been waking up every day for the last 1,479 days hoping this would be the day they would learn their son Amir would be freed. How does it show respect to Amir's mom and dad to use their son's plight and possibly even threaten the negotiations that are going on now in order to make a partisan political point and jeopardize his release?

We have had a rigorous debate on the international Iran agreement, and I know from talking to colleagues and being in many meetings that those on our side have been very thoughtful and thorough—and certainly the chairman has as well—in coming to our positions in a highly charged, difficult, and very complicated situation. I spent many weeks in classified briefings, meetings with nuclear experts, meetings with the Ambassadors, and personally calling each of those involved in the negotiations in the P5+1 countries, meeting with constituents in Michigan who feel very passionately about this issue on both sides, and I have made my decision—the decision I believe is best for America, for Israel, and for our allies. I did not make my decision on the day the agreement was announced, before I had ever read it, or even before it was announced—regrettably, as many Republican colleagues in the House and Senate did.

We have had a vote in the Senate. We have now had two votes on this issue. Today or tomorrow we will have a third vote, not because the majority leader is expecting a different result—we have all taken our positions—but because he wants to score political points and bring in as part of that vote four American hostages and what is happening to them. Those political points will be scored at the expense of Amir Hekmati from Flint, MI, who has served his country honorably.

Mr. President, I have gotten to know the Hekmati family, and I know how much their son's freedom means to them. Any of us who have children can understand what they are going through. I have personally talked with the President and other officials at the highest levels of our government who are working tirelessly to secure Amir Hekmati's release and return him to his loving family, along with the other Americans held hostage.

This is a diplomatic mission. It is a humanitarian mission. Yet the majority leader is on a political mission that is not going to help. He wants to interfere with and disrupt the international

nuclear agreement with Iran. I understand that. I understand his and others' position. But they are willing to use Amir and other American hostages in the process, and that is wrong. This political stunt by the majority leader does not help bring Amir home. It doesn't help bring the other three Americans home. It just adds more politics to the situation.

What is very disturbing to me, after always having bipartisan support—one of the things I could always say to my constituents was that when it comes to the issues around Israel and the Middle East, we have always been together on a bipartisan basis—until now and what has happened over the last few months.

Unfortunately, what is happening on this debate and the vote we will have tomorrow—bringing the American hostages into this debate on Iran is not the first time we are seeing partisan politics interjected into this debate. I still will never forget the 47 Republican Senators who wrote a letter to the Supreme Leader in Iran—our enemy, the Ayatollah—to tell him not to pay any attention to the President of the United States.

I have to say that if it were reversed and if there were 47 Democrats, everything would have halted in this Chamber. There would have been impeachment hearings. We would have been called traitors. It would have gone on and on. It is shocking to me. If this had happened—when we were debating going into Iraq, if we had written a letter to Saddam Hussein saying “Don't listen to the President of the United States” or anybody else, for that matter, any other President, that would have been a national crisis and there would have been outrage. Yet, somehow, 47 Republican Senators can write to the Ayatollah in the middle of an international negotiation that was difficult at best, when we know that Iran is within 3 months of having a nuclear weapon right now, by the way, that we should all be concerned about. I know we are, except some of us act as if we can go back to renegotiate something, which will take years, when they are going to have enough materials within 3 months.

In the middle of all that, almost half of this Chamber writes to the people who are funding terrorism and who are our opponents and enemies in terms of the Ayatollah, saying: Hey, by the way, the President of the United States—don't listen to him. Don't listen to him.

Interestingly, Senator COTTON said in that letter that of course it will take 60 votes to pass anything in the Senate—which, of course, it does and which, of course, we are debating now. And folks are acting as though it doesn't. But the Ayatollah was sent a letter that said it would take 60 votes, so whoever wrote him might want to check in with him.

So here we are now. We have seen the ultimate politics of Members in this body writing to our enemies and saying: Don't listen to the President of the

United States. And now we are in a situation, after voting twice on a serious, difficult, emotional, controversial issue where there are serious, thoughtful people on both sides—because the vote is not going the way the majority wants, now they bring in the four hostages and Amir.

There is a tradition in our country when it comes to issues of national security and the lives of men and women who serve in America. This quote was coined by a former Michigan Senator, Arthur Vandenberg: “Politics stops at the water's edge.”

This picture we are very proud of. It is right outside here in the Reception Room. Very few U.S. Senators have their portraits painted on the wall in the Reception Room, and I am very proud one of those is a former Republican Senator from west Michigan, Senator Arthur Vandenberg. He was a great nemesis of President FDR. He hated the New Deal. He went after President Roosevelt at every turn on his domestic agenda. But as chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee, when we were being attacked at Pearl Harbor and World War II was happening, he stepped up and said, “Politics stops at the water's edge.”

For over 70 years, that was the way the United States of America acted. That is the way the Senate operated. We have lost that, and I am deeply concerned—not as a Democrat but as an American—about where we find ourselves today on matters of such seriousness, international threats to our country. We can debate them. We can have differences. If someone loses the vote, it becomes time to come back together and find a way to move forward to keep America strong. There are many opportunities for us to do that, many opportunities on this agreement to make it stronger, to focus on the nonnuclear sanctions and other things that we need to do together against Iran, to focus on bringing our heroic Americans home. But this is not the way to do it. This is not the way to do it.

So I stand today to object to what I view as a political stunt, and the vote tomorrow is deeply concerning to me and to people in Michigan who want to bring Amir Hekmati home. This is not politics; this is somebody's life. It is about the future national defense of our country and our allies and the world.

The vote is the vote. We have taken our positions. It is time to come back together as Americans.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from California.

Mrs. BOXER. Thank you very much, Mr. President.

I want to thank my colleague from Michigan for pointing something out today that I haven't heard before, which is that this vote we are going to have tomorrow, which is a revote on the Iran nuclear agreement, adding a couple of pieces regarding hostages and

sanctions regarding Israel, is actually a dangerous vote, and I agree with her completely that it is a political vote.

If you ask the people on the street what they think of Congress, we just are not thought of very well because the people see through this. They see through the politics of this.

You know, we have already voted on this agreement. My friend Senator CORKER, my chairman—I serve on that committee. I am very proud to serve with him. He says: Well, all we want is a vote on the agreement. We gave them a vote. We wanted an up-or-down vote on the agreement. Senator REID asked for that twice, for a 60-vote threshold. Oh, no. Suddenly, even though Senator MCCONNELL has said over the years that every single important vote is a 60-vote threshold, suddenly—this is an important vote. How well I remember a vote cast here on climate change legislation where we got—counting the people who weren't here who said they were for it—56 votes. We fell four votes short. Wouldn't it have been nice if I had gone to the floor and said: This is outrageous. This is outrageous. Let's have a 51-vote threshold.

Well, we knew we needed 60. We didn't play games. We didn't play games with it. That is what we have here. We are playing games with an agreement which already has been voted on, and we had enough people voting in favor of the agreement, if I can say, to derail the Republican plan.

Now derailing this agreement, in my view, means war. And I see my friend on the floor here from Arkansas, and he was the one person who said it. Let's just essentially, he said, bomb this thing away. Well, he is honest about it. Other people say: Oh, just go back and get another agreement. That is code word for “no agreement.” That is code word for “war.”

We have spoken out on this very clearly, and it isn't as if we don't have other issues we need to deal with. The fact is, enough Senators said they support the agreement to derail the effort to stop it. Grow up, accept the fact, and move on. Use it in your campaigns just as we will use it in our campaigns.

I do not think the people in this country want another war in the Middle East, and I feel very strongly that this is a conscience vote. So bring it up 10 times. I am not going to change my vote, especially when I see playing politics has become the way my Republican friends are dealing with this most sober issue.

As you look on the horizon, we know there are a couple of real problems facing us. The budget runs out in 14 days. Are we going to have a government shutdown because some people don't think women should have the right to choose? Are we? I don't know, but we have 14 days to deal with it. Why aren't we dealing with it? We voted on the Iran agreement. It is not going to change. It is just politics as usual. People are sick of it.

Mr. President, let's take a look at the Republican budget. The proposed

Senate Republican budget would cut over one-half billion dollars from the Environmental Protection Agency's budget. I just came from a hearing—a very important and good hearing—where we looked at a horrible tragedy that happened in Colorado. EPA went in there, at the request of the State, to check whether this old mine that hadn't been cleaned up in generations caused a risk of a blowout. And when they started to do their testing, there was a blowout. EPA was devastated with that.

What our committee looked at is how are we going to move forward. Well, we are not going to move forward, I say to my friends, when we cut one-half billion dollars out of the EPA budget that could be used to clean up these mines. When there is a devastating blowout, horrible chemicals, such as cyanide and lead, get into drinking water supplies and it destroys communities. Why would we want to have a budget that cuts so much from the Environmental Protection Agency that 80 percent of the people support? It is so popular. Congress is so unpopular; the EPA is popular. People want a clean environment.

In all my years in office, no one has come up to me and said: The air is too clean. The water is too clean. They say the opposite. They say: You know what. My kid has asthma, clean up the air or they say: I am worried that I can't drink the water. I have to purify it.

So instead of revoting on something we already voted on—and every Member, it is not like anyone was hiding. We all came out. We were either for the agreement or against it. I have to say my colleagues were wonderful in explaining their positions, and I was proud, but I am not proud to see us now go right back to the same thing.

When we have all of these problems facing us, the Republican budget cuts \$400 million from community health centers, preventing 620 new clinics from opening and keeping 2.6 million Americans from getting preventive and lifesaving care—that is right, 400 million from community health centers.

How about the HOME Program, the Nation's primary affordable housing program? It would be practically eliminated with a 93-percent cut. This means a loss in production of about 40,000 affordable housing units across the country.

The Centers for Disease Control, we know how important they are when we have an epidemic looming. It would be slashed by the Republican budget by \$245 million, hurting our efforts to protect communities from diseases such as Ebola and the measles. We all thought the measles were gone. It came back in California and thank God for the CDC for helping us when we needed them.

Then there is the Export-Import Bank. We extended its life and attached it to the Transportation bill, which is great, but the Export-Import Bank expired 78 days ago. And the

Transportation bill that I worked so closely on with Leader McCONNELL, Senator INHOFE, Senator DURBIN, and others—it is stuck in the House of Representatives. I don't know what to think about what they are doing over there, but they need to get going and get that Transportation bill into conference so we can do this. This is a bipartisan bill. But instead of pushing and working on that, we are revoting on an issue we already voted on.

The Ex-Im Bank has real consequences. GE, General Electric, announced it will shift 500 jobs overseas because of the Bank's closure. So anyone who tells you it doesn't have an impact, they are wrong; it does have an impact. Five-hundred families are suffering because the Ex-Im Bank—which we did the right thing in the Senate—is stuck in the Transportation bill in the House. They have yet to mark their bill, and I hope they will.

Then we have the debt ceiling, something Ronald Reagan warned us about over and over again: Don't play politics with the debt ceiling. I remind everybody, when Bill Clinton was President, we balanced the budget. I was here. That shows you how long I have been around. I didn't have these gray hairs then.

So in those years we balanced the budget, created a surplus. And then what happened after Bill Clinton? Immediately, we had this humongous tax cut for the rich, and we had huge deficits under Republican President George W. Bush. Thank God, President Obama has cut that deficit in half, but we still have a debt. That is because two wars were put on the credit card and there were these tax cuts to the rich, which caused huge deficits, so the debt kept climbing up. Now we have to raise the debt ceiling to accommodate the past spending of this Congress.

President Reagan was right: Don't play politics with the debt—even thinking you will hurt our economy. The last time we played these games it cost us a fortune, and it caused huge uncertainty in the markets.

So we have the budget crisis, we have a Republican budget with huge cuts to programs we need, such as the Centers for Disease Control; we have a transportation bill, the authority for which runs out in October. We have all of these things. Yet what are we doing today? We are voting again on Iran. No one, in my view, is going to change their mind.

I was thinking maybe some of my Republican friends might come over to our side in favor of the agreement since Colin Powell is for the agreement, Richard Lugar is for the agreement, John Warner is for the agreement, and Brent Scowcroft is for the agreement—these are all leading Republican voices—and others, many others. I don't see that happening.

For those people who say it has been partisan, it has been partisan. Several Democrats joined Republicans against the agreement. Not one Republican—

not one—despite all the leadership on their side outside the Senate—joined us, so the partisanship has been coming from the other side of the aisle. We are voting again on Iran, so maybe I thought next week we could take up some of these serious issues that I just outlined, these pressing, pressing issues: the budget, the debt ceiling, the Ex-Im Bank, all these incredibly important issues that we are facing. But, no, next week the majority leader has decided to take up abortion—abortion.

What we are going to be faced with is a bill that says to a woman: You cannot have an abortion after a certain period of time. It is a ban—no exception for the health of the women. I wish to talk a little bit about that today.

The bill, as it is coming forward, is extreme. It is a direct attack on women, on doctors, and on the law of the land called *Roe v. Wade*. It is unconstitutional because it offers no health exception. It bans abortion at a certain point in pregnancy, with no exception, no health exception: no help for a woman facing cancer, no help for a woman facing kidney failure, no help for a woman facing blood clots or other tragic complications during their pregnancy. This is a war on women, and that is what they are going to do. They are not going to the debt ceiling, they are not going to the budget, which must be fixed, and they are not going to Ex-Im, even though jobs are leaving the country.

This bill they are taking up next week will revictimize survivors of rape and incest by assuming they are lying, forcing women to go through multiple medical visits to prove they have been victimized. It would throw doctors in jail for up to 5 years for helping a woman after a certain point in her pregnancy, when that doctor knows she risks paralysis, infertility, a woman who has cancer whose life would actually be in danger if that pregnancy is continued.

But don't take it from me, take it from the women who have had to have these abortions, women who desperately wanted a child, such as Thais from California, who learned at the 20-week ultrasound there were multiple tragedies facing her baby's heart and lungs. The baby had no diaphragm, which means her baby would have suffocated to death once outside the womb. You would force that woman to go through a pregnancy, not to mention the impact on the baby.

Then there is Emily from South Carolina, a 26-year-old mother of two girls. During her third pregnancy, she suddenly had extreme health symptoms, including blurred vision and intense abdominal pain. After testing, she was diagnosed with preeclampsia, which posed a serious threat to her health. Under this bill, she could not have been spared the risks to her health.

So when we say there is a war on women, we mean it. We are not just saying words. Frankly, I am confused

with everything else facing us. We had such a bipartisan breakthrough on the Transportation bill. I was so proud to work with the majority leader, so proud of the product that came out of that. I was proud to work with the Democrats and Republicans on the Environment and Public Works Committee—every one of whom was involved and supported the deal that went through. As a matter of fact, we had a majority of both caucuses. Why can't we build on that bipartisanship? Why do we have to go back to the usual corners? It is sad and unnecessary.

But, you know what, we are going to be voting on Iran, so I am going to tell you why I am backing the deal. If you have to go through it again, I am going to go through it again.

The key points of this agreement: No. 1, it cuts off the uranium pathway to a bomb; No. 2, it cuts off the plutonium pathway to a bomb; and, No. 3, it uses the most intrusive inspections regime ever negotiated. When people say: Oh, but they have 24 days to stall if somebody wants to look at their program, let's be clear, not one party in the world who is a party to a nuclear agreement has any deadline, even the United States. If there is a suspicion of a program being hidden, you can stall it off—but not this one. You have to let them in, in 24 days, or they are in breach. There is a mechanism to require Iran to provide the IAEA with access to those suspicious sites—that 24 day-limit that is not present in any other agreement. It requires the Iranians to disclose their past nuclear activities before they receive a penny of sanctions relief, and the United States and our allies have the ability to snap back multilateral sanctions.

The bill that is going to come before us for another vote talks about how we cannot lift sanctions in this deal until certain conditions are met. But it ignores the fact that there is a whole other set of sanctions that are in place for Iran's terrorist activities, and those sanctions are not touched. Don't conflate the two and confuse people. There are sanctions for their non-nuclear activities, which include their horrific support of terrorism; and then there are sanctions for their nuclear activities, which we will be lifting if they agree and carry out the terms of this agreement, particularly since they will not have one penny lifted until they disclose every bit of their past activities.

So let us see what else I can share with my colleagues as to why I support this deal. I have to say, at a time when Congress is not trusted and has the worst approval rating—I am so embarrassed by that—I have come to the point where I look at third parties to make my case. So, 29 of our Nation's top nuclear scientists, including 6 Nobel laureates, say this is a good deal; 60 bipartisan national security leaders say this is a good deal; over 100 former U.S. ambassadors say this is a good deal; three dozen retired U.S. generals

and admirals say this is a good deal; 340 U.S. rabbis say this is a good deal; and 53 Christian leaders and the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops—and we are going to be seeing the Pope here next week—say this is a good deal.

So the religious leadership on the side of this deal, for the most part, is overwhelming because our religious people who lead us here want peace in the world. They do not want to see an escalation of war. We see what war brings. We lost, in the Iraq war, more than 4,000 of our people.

I ask unanimous consent for 1 more minute.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. SASSE). Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mrs. BOXER. Mr. President, this is what our allies are saying:

If the U.S. were to walk away from this deal, international unity would disintegrate, the hardliners in Iran would be strengthened, and we would lose the most effective path to stop Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

That is a direct quote from Philip Hammond, the UK's foreign secretary. He speaks for all of our partners in this—100 nations who support this deal—100 nations who support this deal.

Why would we want to stand with the hardliners in Iran? I know my colleagues wrote to them. And they are partners with them, make no mistake—the hardliners here and the hardliners in Iran.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator's time has expired.

Mrs. BOXER. But I believe if you are a moderate person, support this deal.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Arkansas.

Mr. COTTON. Mr. President, I feel at times as if I have exhausted my words against the nuclear deal with Iran. I have inveighed against the wickedness of the Ayatollahs, their responsibility for the deaths of hundreds of American troops in Iraq and Afghanistan, their support for terror, and their attacks on Israel and other American allies. It is the height of folly, weakness, and credulity to give Iran tens of billions of dollars in sanctions relief and put them on the path to nuclear weapons.

Indeed, I feel as if I can say nothing more than I have already said. But, fortunately, the Democrats who support the Iran nuclear deal have supplied cogent arguments against the deal. Thus, rather than speak myself, I will simply let the Democrats speak in their own astonishing words.

Here are the Democrats on the expiration of the deal.

I remain extremely concerned that after 15 years, the restrictions on how much uranium Iran can enrich and to what level expire and Iran will once again return to its current status as a nuclear threshold state with a breakout time of just a couple of months, if not weeks. It is disconcerting that Iran can achieve this status without breaking the rules or bending the agreement. To be clear, in fifteen years, Iran will be allowed to be a legitimized threshold nuclear state. . . . My

fear is that 15 years from now, America and the world will face an Iran that sees its enrichment power as legitimized, that is wealthier and more economically powerful, and an Iran that is fortified with new weapons and air defenses as embargoes on conventional arms and ballistic missiles expire five and eight years from now.

That was Senator PETERS.

I acknowledge that legitimate concerns have been raised about Iranian activities after the first 10 years of the agreement, sometimes referred to as the "out years." During this time, Iran's breakout time could shrink substantially.

Senator REED of Rhode Island.

When key restraints begin to expire in 10 to 15 years—a blink of an eye to a country that measures its history in millennia—our country will still have to deal with an Iranian leadership that wants to build an industrial-scale nuclear enrichment program. That's a big problem.

Senator WYDEN.

None of us knows what lies 10 or 15 years on the horizon. I have deep concerns about what the shape of Iran's nuclear program could look like beyond this horizon. . . .

Senator BENNET.

And here are the Democrats on Iran's financing of terrorism:

Iran will be disruptive in the Middle East and fund terrorist activities. This regime will continue to deny Israel's right to exist. The Quds Force will still be listed as a terrorist organization, and Iran will continue to exacerbate tensions with allies in the region.

Senator GILLIBRAND.

Let's be clear, Iran is a sponsor of terrorism and an abuser of human rights. This deal doesn't change that.

Senator HEITKAMP.

It is certainly possible, perhaps probable, that Iran will use its additional resources and access to conventional arms to increase its support for terrorist groups.

Senator MERKLEY.

I do share concerns about parts of the agreement, including how Iran could use funds from sanctions relief to continue funding Hezbollah and other terrorists around the world. It is clear they have been funding these activities despite crippling sanctions. And we are right to be concerned that additional funds from sanctions relief, or any other sources from other countries if this agreement is not approved, could be used to continue these outrageous activities.

Senator STABENOW.

Here are the Democrats on Iran's continued nuclear activities and enrichment:

With this deal, we are legitimizing a vast and expanding nuclear program in Iran. We are in effect rewarding years of their deception, deceit, and wanton disregard for international law by allowing them to potentially have a domestic nuclear enrichment program at levels beyond what is necessary for a peaceful civil nuclear program.

Senator BOOKER.

It is certainly possible that Iran will use its nuclear research or nuclear energy program to provide a foundation for a future nuclear weapon program.

Senator MERKLEY.

Here are the Democrats on Iran's adherence to the deal:

Iran is a bad and dangerous actor. We all agree on that.

Senator BOXER.

Critics insist America cannot trust Iran. I agree . . . I still have serious doubts about their government.

Senator CARPER.

We need not, and indeed should not, trust the Iranian regime. Implementation of this agreement may be challenging and we need to be prepared for the possibility that Iran will violate the agreement.

Senator CASEY.

When Iranian extremist leaders chant "Death to America" and "Death to Israel," the first question we have is, "How in the world can we trust them to live up to an agreement?" The answer is: We cannot.

Senator STABENOW.

Even under the deal, we should expect that Iran will cheat when it can, particularly at the margins; that it will continue or even ramp up its destabilizing activities and sponsorship of terrorism with the additional resources provided by increased sanctions relief; that it will seek to break out if the opportunity presents itself after 15 years when specialized inspections fade and many limits on its nuclear program are lifted.

Senator BOOKER.

Iran has misled us in the past when it comes to their nuclear program.

Senator MARKEY.

What a condemnation of Iran, what an indictment of this nuclear deal with Iran. But this indictment comes from the supporters of the deal. Despite their own words, these Democrats have chosen to give Iran billions of dollars that will be used to fund terror and war and ultimately put Iran on the path to nuclear weapons.

So let there be no mistake for history about the consequences of these Democrats' choice: When Iran detonates a nuclear device, these Democrats will bear responsibility. When Iran launches a missile capable of hitting the United States, these Democrats will bear responsibility. When Iran kills more Americans, as it has in Iraq and Afghanistan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, and elsewhere, these Democrats will bear responsibility. When Iran imprisons American hostages, these Democrats will bear responsibility. When Iran attacks Israel through Hezbollah's missiles or Hamas's tunnels, these Democrats will bear responsibility. When Iran kills Jews around the world in places like Argentina and Bulgaria, these Democrats will bear responsibility. When Iran massacres its own citizens, these Democrats will bear responsibility.

President Obama and these 42 Democrats bear a direct political, moral, and personal responsibility for the coming crimes and outrages of Iran's ayatollahs. There will be grave consequences for them and for all of us.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SUCCESS FROM THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH ON WOMEN'S HEALTH AT THE NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Com-

mittee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 242 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 242) celebrating 25 years of success from the Office of Research on Women's Health at the National Institutes of Health.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

AMENDMENT NO. 2663

Ms. MIKULSKI. Mr. President, I call up amendment No. 2663 to the resolution and ask that it be reported by number.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report.

The bill clerk read as follows:

The Senator from Maryland [Ms. MIKULSKI] proposes an amendment numbered 2663.

The amendment is as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the resolving clause)

On page 4, line 1, strike "it is the sense of the Senate that" and insert "the Senate".

On page 4, strike line 2 and all that follows through page 5, line 23, and insert the following:

(1) commends ORWH for its work over the past 25 years to improve and save the lives of women worldwide and expresses that ORWH must remain intact for this and future generations;

(2) recognizes that there remain striking sex and gender differences among many diseases and conditions on which ORWH should continue to focus;

(3) encourages ORWH to continue to focus on ensuring that NIH supports biomedical research that considers sex as a biological variable across the research spectrum; and

(4) encourages the Director of the NIH to continue to consult and involve ORWH on all matters related to the influence of sex and gender on health, especially those matters pertaining to the consideration of sex as a biological variable in research with vertebrate animals and humans.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the amendment?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the amendment.

The amendment (No. 2663) was agreed to.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there further debate on the resolution?

If not, the question is on agreeing to the resolution, as amended.

The resolution (S. Res. 242), as amended, was agreed to.

Ms. MIKULSKI. I further ask unanimous consent that the Mikulski-Colins amendment to the preamble be agreed to; the preamble, as amended, be agreed to; the title amendment be agreed to; and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The amendment (No. 2664) was agreed to, as follows:

(Purpose: To amend the preamble)

In the eighteenth whereas clause, strike "CDC" and insert "Centers for Disease Control and Prevention".

The preamble, as amended, was agreed to.

The resolution, as amended, with its preamble, as amended, reads as follows:

S. RES. 242

Whereas, on September 10, 1990, the Office of Research on Women's Health (in this resolution referred to as "ORWH") was established at the National Institutes of Health (in this resolution referred to as "NIH") to—

(1) ensure that women were included in NIH-funded clinical research;

(2) set research priorities to address gaps in scientific knowledge; and

(3) promote biomedical research careers for women;

Whereas ORWH was established in law by the National Institutes of Health Revitalization Act of 1993 (Public Law 103-43; 107 Stat. 122) and implemented the law requiring researchers to include women in NIH-funded tests of new drugs and other clinical trials;

Whereas today, more than ½ of the participants in NIH-funded clinical trials are women, enabling the development of clinical approaches to prevention, diagnosis, or treatment appropriate for women;

Whereas, in 2015, ORWH, with enthusiastic support from NIH leadership, announced that, beginning in January 2016, NIH-funded scientists must account for the possible role of sex as a biological variable in vertebrate animal and human studies;

Whereas ORWH, along with NIH leadership, enhances awareness of the need to adhere to principles of rigor and transparency, including the need to publish sex-specific results to inform the treatment of women, men, boys, and girls;

Whereas over the past 25 years, ORWH has helped expand research on women's health beyond its roots in reproductive health to include—

(1) the study of the health of women across the life-spans of women; and

(2) biomedical and behavioral research from cells to selves;

Whereas by studying both sexes, ORWH is leading the scientific community to make discoveries headed toward treatments that are more personalized for both women and men;

Whereas today, ORWH communicates through programs and policies that sex and gender affect health, wellness, and how diseases progress;

Whereas turning discovery into health for all, the NIH motto, means studying both females and males across the biomedical research continuum;

Whereas the ORWH Specialized Centers of Research on Sex Differences program supports established scientists who do basic, clinical, and translational research with a sex and gender focus;

Whereas all NIH Institutes and Centers fund and encourage scientists at universities across the Nation to conduct research on the health of women and on sex and gender influences;

Whereas over the past 25 years, ORWH has established several career-enhancement initiatives for women in biomedicine, including the Building Interdisciplinary Research Careers in Women's Health program that connects junior faculty with mentors who share interests in women's health research;

Whereas ORWH co-directs the NIH Working Group on Women in Biomedical Careers, which develops and evaluates policies to promote the recruitment, retention, and sustained advancement of women scientists;

Whereas the Women's Health Initiative (in this resolution referred to as "WHI") marked the first long-term study of its kind and resulted in a wealth of information so that women and their physicians can make more